

May 18, 2015

I am writing to submit my testimony in opposition to House Bills 4052 and Senate Bill 337. As a local citizen in Detroit since 1994, I have great concerns about these bills intervening in my local community's ability to build upon state minimums. Given the overly broad nature of this bill, I am also concerned this bill may have unintended consequences and needlessly interferes with our local community to act in a way that best serves us.

When state lawmakers disagree with a well-researched local solution adopted by local residents based local community reasons, the state needs to respect this work and the wisdom of those doing it. It is wrong to pass a state law to prohibit the local solution. When special corporate interests want to stop local actions they disagree with, they turn to you to prohibit local decision-making. This is wrong, and sadly corrupts the democratic process.

Our local community is working on a community benefits agreement ordinance. We know we are completely within the bounds of state law; not only would this legislation invalidate that ordinance, it would interfere with our ability to pass future ordinances we believe best meet the needs of our community.

It is my belief that local communities are best positioned to know and understand the needs of their communities, including cost of living and employment prospects. It is also my belief that local governments exist to make sure that laws and policies meet the needs and values of the people who live there. As long as local laws do not violate state laws, the state government shouldn't stand in the way of local communities.

I hope you will consider this testimony and join other local elected leaders in opposing House Bill 4052 and Senate Bill 337.

Sincerely,

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